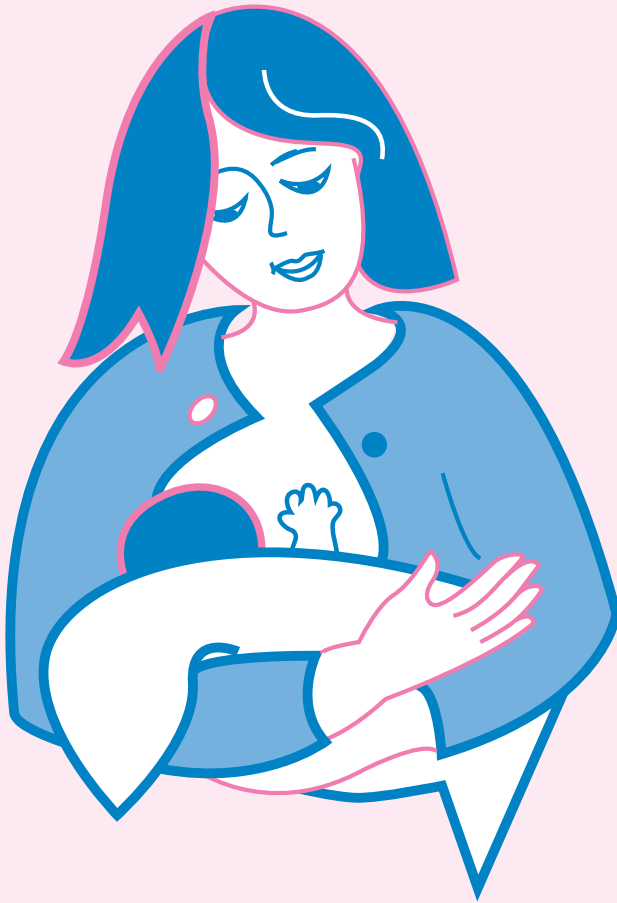


**A guide to help you  
make breastfeeding a success**



**You've Got What it Takes**  
**Give Your Baby the Best**

Bureau of Family and Community Health  
Massachusetts Department of Public Health  
Nutrition Services Division

# What to do . . . Before You're Due

There is a lot you can do before the baby comes to help make your breastfeeding experience a success!

**Tell your family and friends you plan to breastfeed.** If they are aware of your choice, they will be better prepared to help you and your baby after you deliver.

**Take advantage of breastfeeding classes and read books about breastfeeding.**

Learn all you can while you have the time!

**Avoid free gifts from formula companies.** Studies show moms who receive free samples of formula tend to stop breastfeeding sooner.

**Choose a pediatrician and child care provider who support breastfeeding.**

Check out the back of this brochure for more information.

**Remember that breast milk is the ONLY FOOD a new baby needs.**

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends giving a baby only breast milk for the first six months of life.



# When You Deliver . . .

**Plan to feed your baby within one hour after delivery.** Early feedings help to establish good breastfeeding skills.

**Ask to keep your baby with you while in the hospital.** It is easier to breastfeed a hungry baby right away if you are always together.

**Feed your baby as soon as she is hungry.** Stretching, rapid eye movement, and hand-to-mouth movement are all signs of hunger. Do not wait until your baby is crying. She will be frustrated and more difficult to feed.

**Know that your baby will want to breastfeed often.** New babies have tiny stomachs, and breast milk is the easiest and quickest food for your baby to digest. Plus, the more often you breastfeed the more milk you will make!

**Remember - making small amounts of milk in the first few days after delivery is normal.** This first milk is called colostrum and is very important for a newborn. It helps protect your baby from germs and illness. Your mature milk will come in about two to four days after your baby is born.

**Avoid using pacifiers or bottles in the hospital and for the first four to six weeks of life.** Moms who use them early on often find they don't make enough milk.

**Give your baby only breast milk.** If your baby receives formula or water supplements, she may feel too full to breastfeed. Since your body makes milk on demand, giving supplements can decrease your milk supply.

**If you have questions, ask for help right away.** Be sure to know how to reach a lactation consultant, breastfeeding specialist or other breastfeeding support services in your local area.

# Things to Check

**For the first month of life, your baby nurses at least 8-12 times in 24 hours.**

**You can hear your baby swallowing as he nurses.** By the end of the first week, your baby makes at least 3 soft yellow stools every 24 hours. This is a good sign of milk intake for new babies, but stool patterns may change after the first few months.

**By the end of the first week, your baby wets at least 6 diapers every day.**

**Your baby gains weight.** Bring her to the doctor's office for a weight check two to three days after she leaves the hospital. Her weight should return to birth weight by her first well-baby visit, at about two weeks of age.

# Things to Remember

**Your baby will nurse on each breast for as long as he wants.** If he is satisfied after only one breast, that is okay. He will let go by himself or fall asleep when he is finished nursing.

**Sore nipples are usually caused by putting the baby on your breast incorrectly.** Ask your breastfeeding specialist to demonstrate the best feeding position for you and your baby. Frequent breastfeeding does NOT cause sore nipples.

**If your breasts feel overly full, nurse more often.** Breastfeeding your baby is the best way to relieve discomfort from fullness.

**Your baby will want to nurse more often during periods of rapid growth.** Your body will make enough milk to meet her needs.

# Why do Doctors Recommend Breastfeeding?

The American Academy of Pediatrics says that breast milk is the ideal nutrition for babies and recommends giving only breast milk for the first six months of life. Breastfeeding should continue, supplemented by appropriate solid foods, until the baby is at least one year old.

**Breast milk is the perfect food for your baby.** It contains all the nutrients your baby needs to grow, develop, and thrive. Breast milk is also easier to digest than formula, so breastfed babies may have fewer “fussy” periods.

**Breastfeeding keeps babies healthy.** Research shows that protective substances found in breast milk may help prevent common infant illnesses such as ear infections and diarrhea. Breastfed babies may also be protected against several chronic diseases later in life, including diabetes, childhood cancer, asthma and allergies. These protective substances are not found in formula.

**Breast milk is special.** Unlike formula, it changes as your baby grows to meet her changing needs. During each feeding, breast milk changes from thin to creamy to satisfy your baby’s thirst and hunger.

**Breastfeeding may help prevent cancer in mothers.** Studies have found that women who breastfeed are less likely to develop some types of breast and ovarian cancer.

**Breastfeeding saves money.** Breast milk is free and does not require any special equipment. Health care costs may also be lower since breastfed babies generally require fewer medications and visits to the doctor.

# Making Milk is Easy

- Breast milk is all your baby needs for the first six months.
- Feed early and often. The more often you breastfeed, the more milk you will make.
- Breastfeed whenever your baby is hungry. Watch your baby, not the clock.
- Say “no” to pacifiers and bottles until your baby is at least four to six weeks old.
- Do not accept free samples, gifts, or educational materials from formula companies.
- If you have breastfeeding questions or concerns, contact a breastfeeding specialist right away rather than stop nursing or offer formula.

## Have Questions? Need Help?

Massachusetts WIC Nutrition Program

La Leche League

Nursing Mothers Council

Cape & Islands Breastfeeding Warm Line

Massachusetts Breastfeeding Coalition

Massachusetts Lactation Consultant Association

(800) 942-1007

(800) LA LECHE

(617) 244-5102

(888) 890-2229

[www.massbfc.org](http://www.massbfc.org)

[www.geocities.com/mlcaweb](http://www.geocities.com/mlcaweb)

### WIC Nutrition Program • 1-800-942-1007

#### Massachusetts Department of Public Health

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